

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

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In re Application of:	:	Examiner: Vladimir Imas
	:	
Achim PUETTNER et al.	:	
	:	
For: DIRECT PLUG-IN CONNECTION	:	
INCLUDING A CABLE END SLEEVE	:	
	:	Art Unit: 2839
Filed: August 11, 2006	:	Confirmation No.: 5816
	:	
Serial No.: 10/589,058	:	
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Signature: /Kevin Kambo/
 Kevin Kambo

REPLY BRIEF PURSUANT TO 37 C.F.R. § 41.41

SIR:

This paper is responsive to the “Examiner’s Answer” dated May 7, 2010 in connection with the above-captioned application. For the reasons more fully set forth below and in the “Appeal Brief Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 41.37” (“the Appeal Brief”), it is respectfully submitted that the present rejections should be reversed.

The Examiner’s Answer repeats the rejection of claims 10, 11, 13 to 15, 17 to 19, 21 to 23, and 25 to 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as presented in the Final Office Action and adds a “Response to Argument” at pages 10 to 12.

Regarding the rejection of claims 10, 11, 13 to 15, 17 to 19, 21 to 23, and 25 to 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Evans et al., the Examiner continues to consider the flexible cantilever springs 20 and 30 of Evans et al. to fix the flexible circuits 23 and 33 to the printed circuit board 50, despite the fact that Evans et al. makes no disclosure or suggestion whatsoever that any portion of flexible circuits 23 and 33 is fixed with respect to any portion of the PCB by the floating spring bias.

In support of the Examiner’s position, reference is made at page 11 of the Examiner’s Answer to paragraphs [0012] and [0013] of the publication of the present application, corresponding to page 3, line 27 to page 4, line 17 of the Specification. As best

understood by Appellants, the Examiner contends that since electrical contacts 7 make an electrical connection with the beads 10 of the contact element 6, it necessarily follows that “the forces exerted by the clamping element 4 on the beads 10 is just sufficient to make electrical connection between the contact area 7 and the beads 10.” In this regard, it is entirely unclear why the presence of an electrical connection would preclude fixation. Further, the Examiner’s assertion that the Specification discloses just enough force to make an electrical connection finds no support whatsoever in the Specification. To the contrary, the Specification makes clear that the clamping elements 4 provide an amount of force sufficient to fix contact elements 6 onto contact element 3. *See, e.g.*, page 4, lines 12 to 17. Moreover, contrary to the Examiner’s assertions at page 11 of the Examiner’s Answer that “[t]here is no other actuating mechanism or fixing element disclosed by the Appellant,” the Specification discloses that the clamping elements 4 may utilize actuators (*see* page 4, lines 22 to 26) and a latching configuration (*see* page 4, lines 28 to 30).

The Examiner further appears to argue at pages 11 to 12 that the arrangement of Evans et al. functions in the same manner as the arrangement disclosed and claimed by Appellants. However, as previously indicated in the Appeal Brief, the floating contact arrangement of Evans et al. is not configured to fix any part of a contact element to a contact, in direct contrast to the fixing arrangement disclosed in the Specification and claimed in the present claims. Further, there is nothing in the Specification or claims to support the Examiner’s contention that one or more elements of the Appellants’ disclosed and claimed connection is somehow resilient enough to equate to the cantilever springs of Evans et al.

In view of the foregoing, it is readily apparent that the Examiner’s Answer does not address the critical deficiencies of the anticipation rejection of claims 10, 11, 13 to 15, 17 to 19, 21 to 23, and 25 to 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) presented the Final Office Action and/or the Advisory Action.

For at least the reasons indicated above and in the Appeal Brief, Appellants respectfully submit that all of the rejections set forth in the Final Office Action should be reversed.

Respectfully submitted,

/Clifford A. Ulrich/

Dated: July 2, 2010

By Clifford A. Ulrich (Reg. No. 42,194) for:
Gerard A. Messina (Reg. No. 35,952)

KENYON & KENYON LLP
One Broadway
New York, NY 10004
(212) 425-7200
CUSTOMER NO. 26646